private

My dear Monica Rome Mon 5th Feb. 1872

At last I'm glad to send you good news for I am afraid you have been sadly grieved on my account — My good son writes me that he had seen Lord Gs letter of the 28th ult in which My Lord says that he has persuaded Mr Gladstone to give me £60 out of the Civil fund so that now with this addition my pension is £140 a year — I trust to give you the usual £40 that is £20 from me & the other £20 from my 4 dear children & so I hope that this good news will set you well up again

Lord Granville has shown me great kindness & generosity for in another letter he offers to try & encrease my pension but if he should fail he begs me to accept an annual order for £50 to do him a little sketch that will not trouble me or take time"

He did succeed so I'm sure he must have tried his utmost — I shall present him

one of my best pictures for I feel honoured in his Lordships thinking of my painting - Of course his offer was meant most kindly to make up my pension to a decent sum without humbling me

I can now sit down in tranquility I hope for the rest of my life for I assure you I need repose for this pension conflict has cut me up root & branch & but for my excellent Walter I might have been left penny less - I am now well again & enjoying the beautiful spring, my painting flourishes for I have the fountain rooms rent free, my expensive servants sent away, & my house expences reduced to one half indeed I consider myself better off than I was before - indeed with my clever management (such as I did not think I possessed) I can almost double my pension - but every thing in Rome is very dear

My good servant woman I have been obliged to discharge for I had to propose to her to reduce all expences to less than one half & this (as I had paid her well) she could not stand & so she has left

But I have another & better housekeeper (who
4 years ago
came to nurse me when I was so near dying
from inflamation) I am to give her 2 Crowns
instead of 5 Crowns (which I gave the other by
mistake) the fact is I have adopted all the
carefull savings of the Romans – Also I considers
that I may become infirm at my age although I
am well now & that I shall require a good nurse
such as this one is

By the encrease in my pension I can afford
a Cab now & then – to go to some nice place
where I can walk for 2 or 3 hours – then I
get another Cab to take me back, anywhere
within the City walls costs 8 pence

My 2 rooms over the Fountain of Trevi are
the best of the house & I am very comfortable
& my quiet life suits me well

You fancied I might go to England but I
dont think so, for not only the journey might
do me up, but also I am so used to Rome for
my painting (as I hope to sell my pictures
now) that this alone would keep me here

there the Spring shows & every where the almond trees are in blossom – the good things begin to appear in the kitchen – Broccoli – cole flowers artichokes, spinach & then I get venison also wild boar – thrush – woodcocks, fowls & turkeys the meat is excellent, wine good & cheap 2d a pint & such eggs! so you'll not wonder that I try all I can to settle down into nice repose which I need yet assure you & you'll believe you give me a better account of dear Tom & that he looks forward to a walk when the warm weather comes. – how I should like to sit in the old arm chair in his kitchen & have a chat with him & Emma & the dear girls, but I am afraid the time has gone by for this

My only care is in the great number of letters of introduction I get & have to show some attention to all, this does not suit me – 'tis a bore!!

Now I dine at 2 o'clock which does suit me I play on my piano a little but as I cannot take an octave comfortably my playing is not worth much but yet it amuses me a [illegible] change, my reading is brilliant, I get the [illegible] from Florence every day, but I cannot afford an English paper which is hard, but Italian is natural to me as English so I'm content – I'm in hopes of selling my "Cana" for £100